DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 471 218 EC 309 323

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TITLE	Teacher Attrition and Special Education in Alaska.
PUB DATE	2002-07-09
NOTE	36p.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Research (143) -- Tests/Questionnaires (160)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Disabilities; Elementary Secondary Education; Faculty Mobility; *Rural Education; *Special Education Teachers; *Teacher Attitudes; *Teacher Burnout; Teacher Morale; *Teacher Persistence; Teacher Surveys
IDENTIFIERS	*Alaska

ABSTRACT

This study examined reasons for the high level of attrition among special education teachers in Alaska. A survey was sent to a stratified sample of 225 special educators in either remote, rural, or urban locations. Also surveyed were teachers who had removed their special education credentials and teachers who had moved out of state in 2001. A total of 161 surveys were completed. Findings indicate that dissatisfaction with salary, administrative support, job related conditions such as paperwork, collegial support, and working with paraprofessionals were all associated with teacher departures. Results of the study also reveal an aging workforce of special education teachers in Alaska. The study predicts even greater departures from the teaching ranks of special educators due to the combination of working conditions and an aging workforce. The paper presents a detailed analysis of responses to each question. An appendix provides percent responses to each question by different response groups. The survey instrument itself is also appended. (Contains 24 references.) (DB)

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ED 471 218

TEACHER ATTRITION AND SPECIAL EDUCATION IN ALASKA

July 9, 2002

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Abstract

TEACHER ATTRITION
AND SPECIAL EDUCATION IN ALASKA

The purpose of this proposal was to investigate the nature of attrition among special education teachers in Alaska. The investigators attempt to answer the question, why do teachers leave special education positions in Alaska. The project identifies 2,357 Alaska special education teachers from the State credentials office. From this group a stratified random sample of (n=225) teachers was selected from remote, rural, and urban communities in Alaska. In addition, a list of all teachers who had removed their special education credentials (N=39) and a list of all active special education teachers (N=177) who had moved out of state in 2001 were used in this study. Findings indicate that salary, administrative support, job related conditions such as paperwork, collegial support, and working with paraprofessionals are associated with teacher departure. Results of this investigation also reveal an aging workforce of special education teachers. Significant departure from the teaching ranks of special educators in Alaska is predicted due to working conditions combined with an aging workforce.

Literature Review

Alaska is facing an extreme shortage of special education teachers. During the 2001-2002 school year seventy-five special education teaching positions remained unfilled in Alaska during the school year (Department of Education and Early Childhood, 2002). Many teachers with license to teach special education refuse to fill these and other special education positions throughout the State of Alaska. Analysis of school and staffing surveys and teacher follow-up surveys conducted by the National Council of Education Statistics show that the overall attrition rate in the public school system of 5.6 percent between 1993-1994 and 1994-1995 school years for public school teachers were similar to those between 1987-88 and 1988-1989 school years (Bobbit, Faupel, & Burns, 1991; Boe, Bobbit, & Cook, 1995; Coleman, 2000; US Dept. of Education, 1997). In an analysis of earlier surveys, Bobitt, et. al. (1991) found that the rate at which public school teachers left general education changed insignificantly regardless of their field of study, except for public school special education teachers. According to their analysis, more teachers in special education exited the teaching profession than general education teachers: 7.9 percent of special education teachers and 5.8 percent of general education teachers. Three years later the 1990-1991 *Schools and Staffing Survey* and 1992 *Teacher Follow-up Survey* found that the trend continued, with 6.3 percent of teachers in special education and 5.6 percent of teachers in general education in public schools were leaving the teaching profession (Boe, et al., (1995). Although these proportions seem significant, and they are, it is important to remember researchers were concerned only with those teachers who left education altogether and did so during the one-year period.

A second contributor to job openings is the attrition of new or beginning teachers. Of all beginning teachers who enter the profession, 40-50 percent will leave during the first seven years of their career, and in excess of two-thirds of those will do so in the first four years of teaching (Huling-Austin, 1986).

Of course many forces impact the issue of teacher retention. Discrepancies in teacher salary both across districts and across states also play a role in teacher attrition. Further, there are large inequalities across districts in teacher's salaries and teaching conditions. As a consequence, teacher shortages are common – especially in fields like math, science, and special education where competing occupations offer more attractive opportunities, and in cities and other low-income districts where salaries and working conditions are not competitive (Fineman-Nemser, 1996).

Certainly salaries and teaching conditions are not the only factors which influence attrition and research has been conducted which points to the effects of varying levels of education (Marso & Pigge, 1995) and increasing levels of experience (Huling & Austin, 1986), largely though within general education. Huling & Austin (1986), when looking at burn-out among general educators, found that first year teachers are 2.5 times more likely to leave the profession than their more experienced counterparts. Of this first-year cohort, an additional 15 percent will leave after their second year and still another 10 percent will leave after their third year. The turnover rate for general educators settles at 6 percent during the fifth year.

According to Miller, Brownell, & Smith (1999), there are three major factors that influence teacher retention: external factors (retirement incentives, availability other teaching positions; employment factors (work conditions, rewards, commitment); personal factors (teacher demographics and background). Characteristics associated with attrition include age,

gender and marital status (Stinebrickner, 1998) and academic talent (Theobald, 1990). Concerns more specific to special educators involve caseloads, paperwork, instructional materials, administrative support, isolation and school climate (Coleman, 2000; Miller, et al., 1999).

The actual act of teaching during school hours consists mostly of instructing classrooms of students. Other equally important teaching duties such as planning, grading papers, working with colleagues, conferencing with parents and/or students and working with curriculum and assessment are typically not part of the day and must be attended to outside of school hours. As reported by the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (1996), no other nation requires teachers to teach more hours per week than the United States; "Until working conditions improve, the United States is likely to continue to face a teacher attrition crisis". This assertion applies even more so to special education, which involves litigiously derived processes requiring copious forms, plans, meetings, notices, assessments, and safeguards. The relative weight of these special education management duties in the spiral of attrition has yet to be addressed in the literature. Further research is needed that considers the roles, responsibilities, and duties, which are unique to special education in contributing to the attrition phenomena.

Most national studies on teacher supply and demand conclude that shortages are showing up in certain curriculum areas and in certain geographic areas, with a shortage of special education teachers in particular (Coleman, 2000). Further, more teachers in special education exit the teaching profession than general education teachers (Bobbitt, et. al., 1991: Boe, et. al., 1995). The National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE, 1990) reported that special education attrition is one of the most troublesome issues facing public education. A high turnover rate in qualified special education teachers is a cause for concern at a time when there are increasing numbers of students needing special education (US Department

of Education, 1997). IDEA, the provision for a free, appropriate public education is dependent on the retention of qualified personnel. In the years from 1983 to 1997, the number of special education teachers needed increased steadily from approximately 19,000 to 35,000 (Coleman, 2000).

Perhaps more important to the field of special education teacher training is a consideration of teachers leaving special education, often giving up their licenses, and returning to teach in general education. This problem was addressed by Boe, et. al. (1995) when they noted that analysis of the 1990-91 *Schools and Staffing Survey*, indicated that 49.2 percent of special education teaching vacancies are the direct result of attrition. In other words, special education is a considerable factor affecting the amount of hiring which takes place in the public school system. Reports of recent research (Sack, 1999) indicate that about 7.2 percent of teachers in special education switch to general education each year but less than 1 percent of general educators switch to special education.

Just as attrition among special education teachers far surpasses that of regular education teachers, so to within special education there is variation. Special education teachers who primarily work with emotional and behavioral disorders display attrition rates significantly higher than special education teachers who work with students displaying other types of disabilities. Many new teachers find that they are unprepared for the reality of the classroom and leave the field because of an inability to cope with teaching related problems. These problems include in-class discipline, difficult parents, and lack of sufficient or appropriate teaching materials – all problem areas that are found in abundance in special education (Henry, 1986). George, George, Gersten, & Grosenick (1995), after studying career intentions of 96 teachers of students with emotional and behavioral disorders, reported that 36.5 percent of teachers in their

study who taught youth with such behavioral/emotional disorders planned to leave the field within one year, and an additional 10.4 percent reported that they were unsure about future career plans. Teachers report feeling overwhelmed and ill-equipped to deal with students' emotional and behavioral problems (Sack, 1999). Meeting the daily learning needs and behavioral problems makes teaching a stressful job and subsequently, when special education teachers are highly stressed due to workload, they are more likely to leave special education (Brownell, Smith & Miller, 1995; Miller, Brownell, & Smith, 1999).

Certification requirements can also attribute to the shortage of qualified personnel. Too few graduates are produced to recruit the 28,000 new teachers needed per year in the field of special education and, according to the US Department of Education (1997), of a field of 330,000 special education teachers, more than 30,000 are not fully certified. Some states require additional requirements for certification – master's degree, certain number of course hours in special education such as California, while other states such as Kentucky that have created systems that allow teachers to get full certification without additional coursework (Coleman, 2000).

Education in general and teaching in particular, especially as a profession, has been slow to develop a systematic way to induct beginners gradually into the complexities of a job that demands hundreds of management decisions every day (Croasmun, Hampton, & Hermann, 1998). Alternative education programs intended to provide the requisite skills and knowledge while exposing them to the realities of the classroom have not been all that successful in slowing the rate of attrition. It has been found that 60 percent of teachers who participate in such alternative programs leave teaching by their third year, compared to 10-15 percent for traditionally trained teachers (Darling-Hammond, 2000).

The impact of teacher attrition on education is far reaching. Districts invest a great deal of time, resources, and money in recruiting efforts and even more in formal and informal training and mentoring. Whenever a teacher leaves a district a significant loss in incurred (Adams & Dial, 1993, Johnson et al, 1989). Even once the teacher leaves, that teacher still continues to siphon scarce resources through added recruiting and hiring replacement costs. Further, on a very real level, student and school performance suffer as turnover is disruptive to educational programming, planning and continuity (Theobald, 1990; Starlings et al, 1992). Researchers have established a high degree of correlation between teacher turnover and deceases in student performance (Bempah, Kaylen, Osburn, Birkenholz, 1994; Starlings and Dybdahl, 1994)

University of Alaska system cannot recruit and produce enough graduates to meet the demands. The annual supply of degree graduates on teacher-preparation programs in special education is exceptionally low compared to the need (Supply and Demand Report, Alaska Teacher Placement Offices, 2000). The recent phenomena of special education teachers leaving the field are further reason for concern. It is difficult for colleges to justify spending funds to train special education teachers who after a few years remove these credentials or leave the field of special education. In Alaska, among the qualified ranks of teachers are a growing number who are removing their special education credentials for their teaching certificate (Personal communication, Cathy long, Alaska Department of Early Childhood and Special Education, 2001).

The media has recently circulated stories that special education shortages are widespread. The Alaska Teacher Placement Services stated in May 2001, that seventy-five special education positions remained unfilled in Alaska schools. School district reactions to such conditions have recently included asking teachers who have credentials in special education but who are teaching

in general education classrooms to transfer to special education. In some cases districts have provided incentives and in other cases have forced transfers on teachers.

It has been reported that in reaction to district responses to shortages in special education, that some teachers have been removing special education licenses for their credentials. According to the Alaska State Department of Education and Early Development, this seems to be a recent trend. Clarification of scope and nature of this trend would seem very important to Alaska. Describing the nature of this attrition and the consequence to teacher morale is both timely and needed. The purpose of this study is to understand the factors that influence retention and attrition among special education staff and to provide some insights to help school districts in Alaska retain qualified personnel.

Methods

Design of the Survey

This survey was designed to gather information that would broaden our understanding of teacher departure from Special Education teaching positions in Alaska. The survey itself was concerned with three broad areas concerning retaining special educators. These three broad areas were: factors affecting attrition decision-making, job related factors, and district sponsored attrition reduction factors. In addition to these broad areas of concern an open-ended question allowed participants discuss alternative reasons for departure or what factors kept them in the special education teaching ranks.

The survey comprised three sections for information collection and a demographics section for use during the analysis of participants. This survey format was selected to make the process as "user-friendly" as possible. The survey used a scale to establish "degree of agreement" with the statement made (1 = not at all; 2 = somewhat; 3 = mostly; 4 = primarily). \

The design of the survey instrument was based on three elements. First an extensive literature review of the most recent research on teacher attrition and special education. Second, the original design was sent to two experts in the field of teacher attrition for review and suggestions content and survey design. Finally, a pilot of the instrument was conducted with 35 graduate students in special education at the University of Alaska Anchorage during the spring of 2001. These procedures ensured for the reliability of the instrument and the use of valid questions of concern in this study.

Sampling Procedure

The list of all individuals possessing their special education teacher's certification, obtained from Alaska State Department of Education in 2001, contained 3,837 names. Further cleaning resulted in 2,573 separate names (removing redundancy and names with partial or no contact information). The study comprised 177 teachers who were recorded as residing out of state and 39 who had removed their special education certification from their teaching license or allowed it to expire and 2,357 individuals who maintained their special education certification and resided in the state of Alaska as of 2000.

In order to evaluate teacher attrition in special education researchers organized the list of names according to the teacher's decision to leave, move, or stay in special education. The decision to leave was defined, for the benefit of this study, as those individuals who, in the year 2000, had selected not to renew their endorsement in special education or actively removed the endorsement in special education from their Type A Teaching Certificate. Those individuals who had moved away from special education teaching positions (moved into regular teaching positions or administration) or had forwarded addresses outside of Alaska were defined as movers. Those with active special education endorsements and currently working in special

education while resided in Alaska were defined as staying. In order to obtain an accurate account of the relative strength of the decision to leave special education a comparison was made based on teachers who left the field or who had not left yet. It was decided that for the purposes of this study a comparison would be made between teachers who had left, moved away, or stayed in the field of special education.

In order to obtain an accurate accounting of active Alaska special education teachers, a stratified random sample of 225 individuals were selected from the total population of active special educators (N=2,324). The population was initially parsed on two demographic variables, accessibility (Urban, Rural, and Remote) and geographic location (Aleutians, Central, South Central, South East, South West, and North). During the first week of April 2002, a random sample of the individuals comprising these three groups (urban, n=75; rural, n=75; remote, n=75; or n=225) all movers (n=177) and all leavers (n=39) were sent a copy of the Teacher Attrition and Special Education survey (Attachment #1). Surveys were sent along with a self-addressed-stamped-envelope for ease of return. In addition, a cover sheet was included which introduced the survey and petitioned participation (Attachment #2). Two copies of the Consent to Participate form were also included, one to be returned with the completed survey and the other for the participants records (Attachment #3). During the next three weeks, 161 completed surveys were returned or contacted by phone to complete surveys across all accessibility areas.

Data Analysis

The data analysis proceeded in phases. The first phase involves a description of survey participants (demographics). The second phase is an analysis of the survey data by the percent of responses and the comparison of responses by groups. Tables 1-15 show whether a subject had a current special education position and how they rate the affect of each variable.

The third phase was an analysis variance among grouped (active special education position or not) results on the 16 survey questions. Groups were organized into currently teaching special education (yes) and not actively teaching special education (no). Analysis of variance was run on all variables (Q'S #1-16) with the "Current Special Education" query serving as the Independent Variable. In order to run ANOVA, the nominal response values from the survey were converted to quantitative values; i.e., for the Independent Variable, "Yes" = 1 and "No" = 2 and for the Dependent Variables (Q's #1-#16), "Not at all" = 1, "Somewhat" =2, "Mostly" = 3, and "Primarily" = 4.

A separate analysis will be done on the comments and a word-table will be prepared with the themes that emerged. This analysis will include an identification of the major themes and a categorical sort of the comments into themes with a cross check for verification; and the selection of quotes reflecting the theme with representative comments to illustrate each area. These will be presented in a future section "Specific Findings for Other Contributing Factors."

Phase 1 – Demographics

Of the total respondents (n=161), 125 were female and 33 were male ranging in age from 25 to 67 years old, 72 percent were over 50 and 73 percent were married, with 21 percent being single. Respondents were experienced teachers with 61 percent having twenty or more years of experience and 10 percent having less then five years of experience. In addition, 69 percent (n=111) held master's degrees and 4.3 percent (n=7) held a doctorate. The year of certification varied from 1935 to 2000. Of the total sample, 78 (48.4%) were in current special education positions while 68 (42.2%) had left the field of special education. Fifteen respondents left this question blank.

Phase 2 - Survey Percent Responses*

The second phase is an analysis of the survey data by the percent of responses and the comparison of responses by groups. Tables 1-15 show whether a subject had a current special education position and how they rate the affect of each variable.

- **Factors Affecting Attrition**

How much has these factors affected your decision to stay or leave special education?

Table 1 (Note: No means not actively teaching special education.)
Q #1 How has **salary** affected your decision to stay or leave special education?

	Count				Percent			
	No	Yes	(Blank)	Total	No	Yes	Blank	Tot
Not at all	53	32	7	92	67.9%	47.1%	46.7%	57.1
Somewhat	19	22	7	48	24.4%	32.4%	46.7%	29.8
Mostly	4	7		11	5.1%	10.3%	0.0%	6.8
Primarily	2	2		4	2.6%	2.9%	0.0%	2.5
(Blank)		5	1	6	0.0%	7.4%	6.7%	3.7
Grand Total	78	68	15	161	100	100	100	10

Table 2 (Note: No means not actively teaching special education.)
Q #2: How has **marital status** affected your decision to stay or leave special education?

	Count				Percent			
	No	Yes	(Blank)	Total	No	Yes	Blank	Tot
Not at all	65	49	13	127	83.3%	72.1%	86.7%	78.9
Somewhat	9	13	1	23	11.5%	19.1%	6.7%	14.3
Mostly	1	4		5	1.3%	5.9%	0.0%	3.1
Primarily	3			3	3.8%	0.0%	0.0%	1.9
(Blank)		2	1	3	0.0%	2.9%	6.7%	1.9
Grand Total	78	68	15	161	100	100	100	10

Table 3 (Note: No means not actively teaching special education.)
Q #3: How has **experience** affected your decision to stay or leave special education?

	Count				Percent			
	No	Yes	(Blank)	Total	No	Yes	Blank	Tot
Not at all	45	25	8	78	57.7%	36.8%	53.3%	48.4
Somewhat	20	21	3	44	25.6%	30.9%	20.0%	27.3
Mostly	5	13	2	20	6.4%	19.1%	13.3%	12.4
Primarily	8	7	1	16	10.3%	10.3%	6.7%	9.9
(Blank)		2	1	3	0.0%	2.9%	6.7%	1.9
Grand Total	78	68	15	161	100	100	100	10

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Table 4

Q #4: How has **commitment** affected your decision to stay or leave special education?

	Count			
	No	Yes	(Blank)	Total
Not at all	48	32	10	90
Somewhat	13	16	1	30
Mostly	9	10	1	20
Primarily	3	6		9
(Blank)	5	4	3	12
Grand Total	78	68	15	161

	Percent			
	No	Yes	Blank	Tota
Not at all	61.5%	47.1%	66.7%	55.9
Somewhat	16.7%	23.5%	6.7%	18.6
Mostly	11.5%	14.7%	6.7%	12.4
Primarily	3.8%	8.8%	0.0%	5.6
(Blank)	6.4%	5.9%	20.0%	7.5
Grand Total	100	100	100	10

Table 5

Q #5: How has **housing** affected your decision to stay or leave special lucation?

	Count			
	No	Yes	(Blank)	Total
Not at all	57	45	12	114
Somewhat	16	15	2	33
Mostly	3	3		6
Primarily	1	4		5
(Blank)	1	1	1	3
Grand Total	78	68	15	161

	Percent			
	No	Yes	Blank	Tota
Not at all	73.1%	66.2%	80.0%	70.8
Somewhat	20.5%	22.1%	13.3%	20.5
Mostly	3.8%	4.4%	0.0%	3.7
Primarily	1.3%	5.9%	0.0%	3.1
(Blank)	1.3%	1.5%	6.7%	1.9
Grand Total	100	100	100	10

- **Job Related Factors**

  How have the following job related factors affected your decision to stay or leave special education?

Table 6

Q #6: How has working with **parents and families** affected your decision to stay or leave special educatio

	Count			
	No	Yes	(Blank)	Total
Not at all	36	18	4	58
Somewhat	30	33	9	72
Mostly	8	14	1	23
Primarily	4	2		6
(Blank)		1	1	2
Grand Total	78	68	15	161

	Percent			
	No	Yes	Blank	Tota
Not at all	46.2%	26.5%	26.7%	36.0
Somewhat	38.5%	48.5%	60.0%	44.7
Mostly	10.3%	20.6%	6.7%	14.3
Primarily	5.1%	2.9%	0.0%	3.7
(Blank)	0.0%	1.5%	6.7%	1.2
Grand Total	100	100	100	10

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Table 7

Q #7: How has working with **TA's & Para pros** affected your decision to stay or leave special education?

	Count			
	No	Yes	(Blank)	Total
Not at all	48	30	7	85
Somewhat	22	20	5	47
Mostly	4	12	1	17
Primarily	2	5		7
(Blank)	2	1	2	5
Grand Total	78	68	15	161

	Percent			
	No	Yes	Blank	Total
Not at all	61.5%	44.1%	46.7%	52.8%
Somewhat	28.2%	29.4%	33.3%	29.2%
Mostly	5.1%	17.6%	6.7%	10.6%
Primarily	2.6%	7.4%	0.0%	4.3%
(Blank)	2.6%	1.5%	13.3%	3.1%
Grand Total	100	100	100	100

Table 8

Q #8: How has working with **peers** affected your decision to stay or leave special education?

	Count			
	No	Yes	(Blank)	Total
Not at all	39	20	5	64
Somewhat	26	22	6	54
Mostly	8	18	1	27
Primarily	4	8	2	14
(Blank)	1		1	2
Grand Total	78	68	15	161

	Percent			
	No	Yes	Blank	Tota
Not at all	50.0%	29.4%	33.3%	39.8%
Somewhat	33.3%	32.4%	40.0%	33.5%
Mostly	10.3%	26.5%	6.7%	16.8%
Primarily	5.1%	11.8%	13.3%	8.7%
(Blank)	1.3%	0.0%	6.7%	1.2%
Grand Total	100	100	100	100

Table 9

Q #9: How has **administration** affected your decision to stay or leave special education?

	Count			
	No	Yes	(Blank)	Total
Not at all	18	15	3	36
Somewhat	30	24	5	59
Mostly	15	13	3	31
Primarily	15	15	3	33
(Blank)		1	1	2
Grand Total	78	68	15	161

	Percent			
	No	Yes	Blank	Tota
Not at all	23.1%	22.1%	20.0%	22.4%
Somewhat	38.5%	35.3%	33.3%	36.6%
Mostly	19.2%	19.1%	20.0%	19.3%
Primarily	19.2%	22.1%	20.0%	20.5%
(Blank)	0.0%	1.5%	6.7%	1.2%
Grand Total	100	100	100	100

Table 10

Q #10: How has **paperwork** affected your decision to stay or leave special education?

	Count			
	No	Yes	(Blank)	Total
Not at all	14	6	2	22
Somewhat	15	24	1	40
Mostly	22	20	5	47
Primarily	26	17	6	49
(Blank)	1	1	1	3
Grand Total	78	68	15	161

	Percent			
	No	Yes	Blank	Total
Not at all	17.9%	8.8%	13.3%	13.7%
Somewhat	19.2%	35.3%	6.7%	24.8%
Mostly	28.2%	29.4%	33.3%	29.2%
Primarily	33.3%	25.0%	40.0%	30.4%
(Blank)	1.3%	1.5%	6.7%	1.9%
Grand Total	100	100	100	100

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Table 11

Q #11: How has **class size** affected your decision to stay or leave special lucation?

	Count			
	No	Yes	(Blank)	Total
Not at all	21	10	2	33
Somewhat	25	21	4	50
Mostly	16	25	4	45
Primarily	15	10	3	28
(Blank)	1	2	2	5
Grand Total	78	68	15	161

	Percent			
	No	Yes	Blank	Total
Not at all	26.9%	14.7%	13.3%	20.5
Somewhat	32.1%	30.9%	26.7%	31.1
Mostly	20.5%	36.8%	26.7%	28.0
Primarily	19.2%	14.7%	20.0%	17.4
(Blank)	1.3%	2.9%	13.3%	3.1
Grand Total	100	100	100	10

Table 12

Q #12: How has **student problem behavior** affected your decision to stay or leave special lucation?

	Count			
	No	Yes	(Blank)	Total
Not at all	29	19	3	51
Somewhat	27	27	7	61
Mostly	12	17	1	30
Primarily	8	5	2	15
(Blank)	2		2	4
Grand Total	78	68	15	161

	Percent			
	No	Yes	Blank	Tota
Not at all	37.2%	27.9%	20.0%	31.7
Somewhat	%	39.7%	46.7%	37.9
Mostly	15.4%	25.0%	6.7%	18.6
Primarily	10.3%	7.4%	13.3%	9.3
(Blank)	2.6%	0.0%	13.3%	2.5
Grand Total	100	100	100	10

- **Attrition Reduction Factors**

How have these factor affected your decision to leave or stay in special education?

Table 13

Q #13: How have **mentoring programs** affected your decision to stay or leave special education?

	Count			
	No	Yes	(Blank)	Total
Not at all	70	50	10	130
Somewhat	5	11	3	19
Mostly	1	4	1	6
Primarily		2		2
(Blank)	2	1	1	4
Grand Total	78	68	15	161

	Percent			
	No	Yes	Blank	Total
Not at all	89.7%	73.5%	66.7%	80.7
Somewhat	6.4%	16.2%	20.0%	11.8
Mostly	1.3%	5.9%	6.7%	3.7
Primarily	0.0%	2.9%	0.0%	1.2
(Blank)	2.6%	1.5%	6.7%	2.5
Grand Total	100	100	100	100

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Table 14

Q #14: How has **more money** affected your decision to stay or leave special education?

	Count			
	No	Yes	(Blank)	Total
Not at all	47	29	6	82
Somewhat	23	23	5	51
Mostly	2	9	1	12
Primarily	3	4	1	8
(Blank)	3	3	2	8
Grand Total	78	68	15	161

	Percent			
	No	Yes	Blank	Tota
Not at all	60.3%	42.6%	40.0%	50.9
Somewhat	29.5%	33.8%	33.3%	31.7
Mostly	2.6%	13.2%	6.7%	7.5%
Primarily	3.8%	5.9%	6.7%	5.0%
(Blank)	3.8%	4.4%	13.3%	5.0%
Grand Total	100	100	100	100

Table 15

Q #15: How has the **use of communication** affected your decision to stay or leave special education?

	Count			
	No	Yes	(Blank)	Total
Not at all	64	42	11	117
Somewhat	9	18	2	29
Mostly	3	4	1	8
Primarily		1		1
(Blank)	2	3	1	6
Grand Total	78	68	15	161

	Percent			
	No	Yes	Blank	Total
Not at all	82.1%	61.8%	73.3%	72.7
Somewhat	11.5%	26.5%	13.3%	18.0
Mostly	3.8%	5.9%	6.7%	5.0%
Primarily	0.0%	1.5%	0.0%	0.6%
(Blank)	2.6%	4.4%	6.7%	3.7%
Grand Total	100	100	100	100

Phase 3 - Analysis of Variance

The third phase was an analysis variance among grouped (active special education position or not) results on the 16 survey questions. Groups were organized into currently teaching special education (Yes) and not actively teaching special education (No). Analysis of variance was run on all variables (Q'S #1-16) with the "Current Special Education" query serving as the Independent Variable. In order to run ANOVA, the nominal response values from the survey were converted to quantitative values; i.e., for the Independent Variable, "Yes" = 1 and "No" = 2 and for the Dependent Variables (Q's #1-#16), "Not at all" = 1, "Somewhat" =2, "Mostly" = 3, and "Primarily" = 4.

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Q #1 Salaries

	N	Mean	Significant
Yes	63	1.6667	.059
No	78	1.4231	

Alpha= .05

Q #2 Marital Status

	N	Mean	Significant
Yes	66	1.3182	.562
No	78	1.2564	

Alpha= .05

Q #3 Increasing Experience

	N	Mean	Significant
Yes	66	1.00720	.044
No	78	1.6923	

Alpha= .05

Q #4 Beginning Teachers

	N	Mean	Significant
Yes	64	1.8438	.067
No	73	1.5479	

Alpha= .05

Q #5 Housing

	N	Mean	Significant
Yes	67	1.4925	.171
No	77	1.3247	

Alpha= .05

Job Related Factors

Q #6 Working with and support given by your students' parents.

	N	Mean	Significant
Yes	67	2.0000	.061
No	78	1.7436	

Alpha= .05

Q #7 Working with teaching assistants and other paraprofessionals.

	N	Mean	Significant
Yes	67	1.8806	.005
No	76	1.4737	

Alpha= .05

Q #8 Working with and support given by colleagues.

	N	Mean	Significant
Yes	68	2.2058	.001
No	77	1.7013	

Alpha= .05

Q #9 Working with and support given by your administration.

	N	Mean	Significant
Yes	67	2.4179	.684
No	78	2.3462	

Alpha= .05

Q #10 completing the paper work involved in special education.

	N	Mean	Significant
Yes	67	2.7164	.718
No	77	2.7792	

Alpha= .05

Q#11 Working with too many students or a large caseload.

	N	Mean	Significant
Yes	66	2.5303	.229
No	77	2.3247	

Alpha= .05

Q #12 Working with problem behaviors of youth.

	N	Mean	Significant
Yes	68	2.1176	.411
No	76	1.9868	

Alpha= .05

Attrition Reduction Efforts

Q #13 Mentor Programs

	N	Mean	Significant
Yes	67	1.3731	.003
No	76	1.0921	

Alpha= .05

Q#14 More Money

	N	Mean	Significant
Yes	65	1.8154	.017
No	75	1.4800	

Alpha= .05

Q#15 Use of Communication

	N	Mean	Significant
Yes	65	1.4462	.013
No	76	1.1974	

Alpha= .05

Q#16 Are there other reasons that contribute to your decision we have not mentioned?

	N	Mean	Significant
Yes	62	1.3710	.169
No	73	1.2603	

Alpha= .05

Discussion

Of a total of 161 returned surveys, 42 percent currently have a special education position and 48 percent are not currently teaching special education. This preliminary analysis shows the 42 percent are an older population, primarily interested in retirement, career advancement or the desire to teach in the general education classroom. Although salary (79 percent of the total respondents reported that salary did not at all or somewhat affect their decision to stay or leave special education) did not seem to be a factor in their decision-making, career advancement – administration or private consulting appears to be a motivating factor for some. There is a

significant difference between those who stayed in the field and those who left regarding the affect of "more money". Of the "leavers", those who moved away from special education but still have an active credential in the state of Alaska, 7 of 15 moved to administrative positions, 7 of 15 moved to general education and one left teaching altogether. The move to administrative positions would indicate a desire for career advancement and the possibility of additional salary. Of the "movers", those who left Alaska but still have an active credential, 12 of 33 moved to general education, five retired, five moved to other special education positions and three moved out of teaching. Of the total 48 percent (n=78) who left special education but still have an active credential, 32 left to teach in the general education classroom. The number of teachers moving into general education is consistent with previous research studies.

More experience did not seem to be a factor that attributed to the staying or leaving of the group as a whole. It was reported by 76 percent that increasing experience did not or only somewhat contributed to a decision to stay or leave. However, further analysis does show a significant affect of increasing experience between the two groups -- those who left the field and those who stayed. So too with commitment of a beginning teacher; 75 percent report not at all or that commitment only somewhat affected their decision to stay or leave special education. Although housing can be a factor in the remote areas of Alaska, in general it was not a factor with this group with 91 percent reporting not at all or only somewhat.

Job Related Factors

Working with parents and families did not seem to be major factors in a decision to stay or leave with 81 percent and 82 percent respectively saying that they were not at all affected or only somewhat affected. Similarly, 17 compared to 6 reported teaching assistants and paraprofessionals mostly or primarily affected their decision to stay or leave. Analysis indicates

a significant difference regarding the affects of working with paraprofessionals between the two groups (current special education teacher and not currently teaching in special education) according to the ANOVA.

Working with peers seems to have more affect on the decision to stay or leave with 73 percent reporting not at all or only somewhat and 25 percent reporting mostly or primarily. Again, working with peers seems to be an important factor to those currently holding special education positions with 26 compared to 12 reporting mostly or primarily affected by peers. A teacher who had removed her special education credential added that our study did not emphasize the effect of peer interaction enough, she states the following; *"You don't address the cold reception or indifference normally given to special education teachers by regular classroom teachers. This was the source of frustration for me."* Again, the ANOVA indicates a significant affect of working with peers between the Staying In or Leaving Special Education ($p<.01$).

Active special education teachers and those leaving the field report administrative support and paperwork having the greatest affect on their decision. Although 59 percent reported that administration did not or only somewhat affected their decision, 40 percent reported that administration mostly or primarily affected their decision. Teachers (60%) reported that the paperwork mostly or primarily affected their decision to stay or leave. There was not a significant difference between the affect of administration and paperwork between the two groups according to the ANOVA. Both groups experience the affects of paperwork and administration and indicate the importance of this in their decision to stay or leave the field of special education. However, there is no indication that this factor separates the two groups.

Even though the factor 'paperwork' may not separate the two groups it is a significant contributor to job satisfaction. The IEP process and meetings with parents, administrators,

specialists and keeping up with the changing laws takes away from the needed time to plan for individual instruction and lessons. A teacher who moved back to the regular classroom reports, *"Dealing with the politics involved in special education makes it difficult to serve children, to meet their needs, when wading through paperwork and politics our hands are tied behind our backs. I found more teaching time in regular education and that's what I am here for."* It is time-consuming documenting the paperwork and understanding the legal issues and this may contribute to stress and the burnout rate. Further analysis and in-depth interviews may lead to a better understanding of the IEP process and teacher perception of their role in the classroom.

In the total group 52 percent reported that class size did not or only somewhat affected their decision to stay or leave although 45 percent reported that its affect was mostly or primarily. Analysis shows there was not significant difference between the two groups of leavers and stayers. Class size appears to be a contributor but does not separate the two groups.

Working with behavior problems had similar results. Of the total group, 69 percent report no affect or somewhat whereas 28 percent report mostly or primarily that behavior problems affected their decision to stay or leave. Further analysis shows that there is no significant difference between the two groups regarding the affects of behavior problems.

Attrition Reduction Factors

No direct reference to district sponsored mentor programs was made by participants in this study. Mentor relationships were mentioned but none gave direct reference to district sponsored activities. Teachers surveyed reported feeling isolated and not adequately supported in their jobs. For example one participant stated the following; *"I felt overwhelmed by working alone in remote, rural village settings with everyone from mentally retarded to gifted populations."*

Regarding mentoring and the use of communication among peers, most reported that they were not at all affected or only somewhat affected (92 percent and 91 percent respectively). However, of those reporting having this experience, there is strong evidence that this factor plays a role in job clarification and later satisfaction. The following was reported by a teacher from rural Alaska with 14 years of experience, *"what I needed was peer support (not specifically a mentor) but another teacher who had skills in an area I did not and would give me time to help me learn the ropes. That kept me being a special education teacher all these years"*. There was a significant difference between the two groups in both the areas of communication and mentoring indicating that this factor may contribute to the decision to leave ($p<.01$ for mentoring and $p<.05$ for communication among peers between leavers and stayers).

Implications

It appears that several factors affect special education teachers' decision to stay or leave the field. These include support given by parents, administration and peers (including paraprofessionals), job related factors and career advancement. A rural teacher who reports she moved away from special education into regular education states, *"I was weary of being an advocate all the time, dealing with the difficult personalities of classroom teachers and parents. I feel the perfect situation would be the opportunities to switch back and forth every three years or so from SPED to REG ED. I desired a competent special education director whom I could trust to be knowledgeable and stand behind me and stay with our district."*

As mentioned before career advancement is an important factor in teacher attrition. This factor influences the decision to leave the field of special education if the teacher feels that the label of special education teacher will remove them from career advancement. One participant who is currently a principal out of State felt that because of the shortage of special education

teachers and the desire of his peers to keep him in the special education teacher position he could not advance with the certification of special education teacher on his credentials. This respondent *felt he needed to leave the State in order to "up his career" after 14 years in special education.* Career advancement and certainly peer interaction in schools contribute to a final decision to leave the field. A teacher from rural Alaska reported the following, *"I have stayed in special education because every time I have applied for another position I have been turned down. I would leave special education because the paper work has become more important than the students. I get tired of all the meetings. I find it harder to come up with new ways to motivate students."*

Need for Further Study

Additional research needs to be conducted into the nature of the administrative interaction, peer interactions including paraprofessionals, and paper work in order to truly understand attrition in special education in Alaska. The original intention of this project was to look more qualitatively at these factors as they influence the decision to move or stay. However, the current study provides the foundation for further study and has identified the factors most important to those most impacted. We strongly recommend research into the issues surrounding the movement into regular education and the nature of the IEP process and its relation to teacher burnout. In addition, we recommend experimental work into the development of career ladder opportunities for special education teachers that may want advancements in their career without moving away from the teaching ranks of special education.

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Appendix 1

Survey Report by Leaving or Staying in Special Ed partitioned by Urban, Rural, Remote regions of Alaska

Leaving the field of special education.

Those individuals who left the field of special education by removing their endorsement in special education comprise this group. The data obtained by the State of Alaska indicated that during the last year (2001) 39 individuals had removed their special education credentials.

SURVEY PERCENT RESPONSES*

- **Factors Affecting Attrition**

How much has these factors affected your decision to stay or leave special education?

	Percent			
	Not at all	Somewhat	Mostly	Primarily
Salaries	70	26	--	--
Marital status	85	11	--	--
Increasing experience	63	11	11	--
Beginning teachers	67	22	4	--
Housing for teachers	89	7	--	--

- **Job Related Factors**

How have the following job related factors affected your decision to stay or leave special education?

	Percent			
	Not at all	Somewhat	Mostly	Primarily
Working with:				
Parents and families	30	52	15	--
Paraprofessionals	37	41	11	4
Colleagues	33	37	22	4
Administration	19	37	19	22
Paperwork	11	30	41	15
Large caseload	11	26	41	11
Student problem behaviors	33	33	11	11

- **Attrition Reduction Factors**

How have these factor affected your decision to leave or stay in special education?

	Percent			
	Not at all	Somewhat	Mostly	Primarily
Mentor programs	89	4	4	--
More money	56	26	7	--
Use of communication	78	15	4	--

Other reasons were presented by 70% of respondents.

* Row percents may not sum to 100 due to missing data.

Staying in the field of Special Education

Those individuals who continued to reside in Alaska and maintain their special education certification (N=2,357), were initially parsed on two demographic variables; the first, accessibility (Urban, Rural, and Remote), and the second, geographic location (Aleutians, Central, South Central, South East, South West, and North). A random sample of 75 individuals were selected from each of the three accessibility categories; i.e., 75 individuals were randomly selected from those individuals residing in the Urban areas of Alaska, 75 individuals were randomly selected from those individuals residing in the Rural areas of Alaska, and 75 individuals were randomly selected from those individuals residing in the Remote areas of Alaska.

During the first week of April, 2002, all 225 individuals comprising these three groups were sent a copy of the *Teacher Attrition and Special Education* survey (Attachment #1) to complete along with a self-addressed-stamped-envelope for ease of return. In addition, a cover sheet was included which introduced the survey and petitioned participation (Attachment #2). Two copies of the *Consent to Participate* form were also included, one to be returned with the completed survey and the other for the participants records (Attachment #3). During the next three weeks, 74 completed surveys were returned across all three accessibility areas.

The survey itself was concerned with addressing three broad areas which are considered key in attracting and retaining special educators. These three broad areas are:

- Factors affecting attrition decision-making,
- Job related factors, and
- Attrition reduction factors.

Special Education Teachers Staying

Urban

Of the 75 individuals selected from the urban area, 54 were from the South Central area, 12 from the Central area, and nine from the South East area. Within this urban area, a thirty-five percent participation rate was realized (n=26). All except one respondent noted that they possessed special education certification, and none reported that they had removed their certification. Two respondents recorded that they intended to remove it from their credential in the future. Fifty-eight percent of the respondents (n=15) reported that they had moved away from teaching in special education, even though they maintained an active special education teaching credential.

The majority of the respondents were female (81-percent) with anywhere from two to thirty-three years teaching experience. Seventy-percent were at least 41 years of age and roughly the same proportion were married with zero to five children. Eighty-one percent held a Masters level degree, with eight-percent holding a Doctorate. These individuals received their certifications as early as 1968 and as recent as 1997 and forty-two percent are currently teaching special education.

SURVEY PERCENT RESPONSES*

- **Factors Affecting Attrition**

How much has these factors affected your decision to stay or leave special education?

	Percent			
	Not at all	Somewhat	Mostly	Primarily
Salaries	70	26	--	--
Marital status	85	11	--	--
Increasing experience	63	11	11	--
Beginning teachers	67	22	4	--

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Housing for teachers	89	7	--	--

- **Job Related Factors**

How have the following job related factors affected your decision to stay or leave special education?

	Percent			
	Not at all	Somewhat	Mostly	Primarily
Working with:				
Parents and families	30	52	15	--
Paraprofessionals	37	41	11	4
Colleagues	33	37	22	4
Administration	19	37	19	22
Paperwork	11	30	41	15
Large caseload	11	26	41	11
Student problem behaviors	33	33	11	11

- **Attrition Reduction Factors**

How have these factor affected your decision to leave or stay in special education?

	Percent			
	Not at all	Somewhat	Mostly	Primarily
Mentor programs	89	4	4	--
More money	56	26	7	--
Use of communication	78	15	4	--

Other reasons were presented by 70% of respondents.

- Row percents may not sum to 100 due to missing data.

Rural

Of the 75 individuals selected from the rural area, three were from the Aleutians area, 13 from the Central area, 47 were from the South Central area, 10 from the South East area, and two from the South West area. Within this rural area, a thirty-nine percent participation rate was realized (n=29). All except one respondent noted that they possessed special education certification, and none reported that they had removed their certification. Three respondents recorded that they intended to remove it from their credential in the future though. Thirty-four percent of the respondents (n=10) reported that they had moved away from teaching in special education, even though they maintained an active special education teaching credential.

The majority of the respondents were female (76-percent) with anywhere from three to twenty-nine years teaching experience. Seventy-nine percent were at least 41 years of age and roughly the same proportion were married with zero to six children. Sixty-two percent held a Masters level degree, with the remaining holding Bachelors. These individuals received their certifications as early as 1972 and as recent as 2000 and sixty-six percent are currently teaching special education.

SURVEY PERCENT RESPONSES*

- **Factors Affecting Attrition**

How much has these factors affected your decision to stay or leave special education?

	Percent			
	Not at all	Somewhat	Mostly	Primarily
Salaries	45	28	10	--
Marital status	66	21	7	--

Increasing experience	38	31	7	14
Beginning teachers	52	14	10	7
Housing for teachers	86	3	--	7

- **Job Related Factors**

How have the following job related factors affected your decision to stay or leave special education?

	Percent			
	Not at all	Somewhat	Mostly	Primarily
Working with:				
Parents and families	28	41	21	3
Paraprofessionals	55	21	10	3
Colleagues	28	28	28	10
Administration	17	41	17	21
Paperwork	7	28	28	31
Large caseload	7	24	34	24
Student problem behaviors	24	38	21	14

- **Attrition Reduction Factors**

How have these factor affected your decision to leave or stay in special education?

	Percent			
	Not at all	Somewhat	Mostly	Primarily
Mentor programs	70	21	--	--
More money	38	34	7	7
Use of communication	55	28	3	3

Other reasons were presented by 52% of respondents.

*Row percents may not sum to 100 due to missing data.

Remote

Of the 75 individuals selected from the Remote area, 12 were from the North area, seven were from the Aleutians area, 22 from the Central area, two were from the South Central area, seven were from the South East area, and 25 from the South West area. Within this Remote area, a twenty-five percent participation rate was realized (n=19). All respondents noted that they possessed special education certification, and one reported that he/she had removed their certification. None of the respondents recorded that they intended to remove it from their credential in the future. Thirty-two percent of the respondents (n=6) reported that they had moved away from teaching in special education, even though they maintained an active special education teaching credential.

The majority of the respondents were female (74-percent) with anywhere from two to thirty years teaching experience. Fifty-three percent were at least 41 years of age and roughly the same proportion were married with zero to six children. Forty-seven percent held a Masters level degree, with the remaining holding Bachelors. These individuals received their certifications as early as 1977 and as recent as 2001 and fifty-three percent are currently teaching special education.

SURVEY PERCENT RESPONSES*

- **Factors Affecting Attrition**

How much has these factors affected your decision to stay or leave special education?

	Percent			
	Not at all	Somewhat	Mostly	Primarily
Salaries	47	32	11	5

Marital status	89	11	--	--
Increasing experience	37	32	16	16
Beginning teachers	47	5	32	5
Housing for teachers	53	26	5	11

- **Job Related Factors**

How have the following job related factors affected your decision to stay or leave special education?

	Percent			
	Not at all	Somewhat	Mostly	Primarily
Working with:				
Parents and families	37	47	16	--
Paraprofessionals	58	16	16	5
Colleagues	63	16	16	5
Administration	32	32	16	21
Paperwork	21	5	42	26
Large caseload	32	26	21	21
Student problem behaviors	37	32	21	11

- **Attrition Reduction Factors**

How have these factor affected your decision to leave or stay in special education?

	Percent			
	Not at all	Somewhat	Mostly	Primarily
Mentor programs	79	16	--	--
More money	47	26	11	5
Use of communication	63	21	11	--

*Other reasons were presented by 42% of respondents.

Appendix 2
Survey Instrument

Teacher Attrition and Special Education

Principle Investigator: Dr. Starlings UAA
UAA, Special Education, 907-786-4498 or hm 332-4800

Code # _____

- ***First, we would like to know if you have a special education certification. YES (1) / NO (2)***
- ***Have you recently removed your spec. educ. endorsement from your credential? YES (1) / NO (2)***
  - ***If No, do you plan to do this in the future? YES (1) / NO (2)***
  - ***If Yes, when? _____(narative)_____***
- ***Have you moved away from teaching in spec. educ. but still have an active credential? YES(1)/ NO(2)/NA(3)***
  - ***If Yes, why? (e.g., moved to Reg. Educ., Admin., left teaching)_____(narrative)_____***

- **Demographic information**

Gender: Male_(1)__ Female_(2)__; Years in Teaching: _____; Age _____(20-30,31-40,41-50,51+)

Marital Status: Single__(1)__ Married__(2)__ Divorced__(3)__; Number of children_____

Education: Bachelors_(1)___ Masters__(2)__ Doctorate__(3)__; Number of degrees_____

Area(s) certified in Special Educ. _____(narative)____; Regular Educ. _____(narative)_; Year Certified _____

Position you currently hold: ___(narative)_____ Current Spec. Educ. Teacher? YES (1) / NO (2)

- **Factors Affecting Attrition (Please circle response)**

I am going to ask you 16 questions related to reasons others have suggested as contributing to their decision to leave or stay in special education. The first area concerns...

- Salaries

Some teachers leave the profession because they are dissatisfied with the pay they receive from teaching.

1. How much has this factor affected your decision to stay or leave in special education?
Not at all (1) Somewhat (2) Mostly(3) Primarily (4)

- Marital status

Some have suggested that marital status is related more strongly to attrition from teaching than other factors.

2. How has this factor affected your decision to leave or stay in special education?
Not at all (1) Somewhat (2) Mostly(3) Primarily (4)

- Increasing experience

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Sometimes an individual weighs costs and benefits of staying in special education or leaving. With increasing years of experience teachers tend to stay, while new teachers tend to leave when the cost benefit relationship suggest departure.

3. How has this factor affected your decision to leave or stay in special education?

Not at all (1) Somewhat (2) Mostly(3) Primarily (4)

- Beginning teachers

Another factor involved in leaving special education is the initial level of commitment to teaching special education. Some beginning teachers have reported having a low level of commitment to special education but might consider regular education.

4. How has this factor affected your decision to leave or stay in special education?

Not at all (1) Somewhat (2) Mostly(3) Primarily (4)

- Housing for teachers

Teacher housing or the lack of good affordable housing has been associated with teacher attrition.

5. How has this factor affected your decision to leave or stay in special education?

Not at all (1) Somewhat (2) Mostly(3) Primarily (4)

➢ **Job Related Factors (Please circle response)**

The following are job related factors most associated with departure from special education. How do you see your decision affected by the following factors?

- Parents and families.

6. Working with and support given by your students' parents and families.

Not at all (1) Somewhat (2) Mostly(3) Primarily (4)

- Paraprofessionals

7. Working with teaching assistants and other paraprofessionals.

Not at all (1) Somewhat (2) Mostly(3) Primarily (4)

- Peers

8. Working with and support given by colleagues.

Not at all (1) Somewhat (2) Mostly(3) Primarily (4)

- Administration

9. Working with and support given by your administration.

Not at all (1) Somewhat (2) Mostly(3) Primarily (4)

- Paperwork

10. Completing the paper work involved in special education.

Not at all (1) Somewhat (2) Mostly(3) Primarily (4)

- Class Size

11. Working with too many students or a large caseload.

Not at all (1) Somewhat (2) Mostly(3) Primarily (4)

- Problem Behaviors

12. Working with problem behaviors of youth.

Not at all (1) Somewhat (2) Mostly(3) Primarily (4)

➢ **Attrition Reduction Factors (Please circle response)**

- Mentor programs

Most reforms currently focus on supporting and developing skills in teaching through mentorships. This factor generally uses direct involvement of senior teachers in coaching and guiding.

13. How has this factor affected your decision to leave or stay in special education?

Not at all (1) Somewhat (2) Mostly(3) Primarily (4)

- More money

More recent initiatives, aimed at addressing sped teacher attrition, promise greater pay or pay bonuses.

14. How has this factor affected your decision to leave or stay in special education?

Not at all (1) Somewhat (2) Mostly(3) Primarily (4)

- Use of communication

Professional support through on-line access to teaching support groups and communication activities like district online networks have been suggested as a means to keep beginning teachers in the profession.

15. How has this factor affected your decision to leave or stay in special education?

Not at all (1) Somewhat (2) Mostly(3) Primarily (4)

16. Are there any other reasons that contributed to your decision to stay, leave, or move that we have not identified? YES (1) / NO (2) If Yes, please identify:

Would you agree to a follow up interview? Yes (1)or No (2)?

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Corporate Source: Alaska Schools Research Fund	Publication Date: Released Aug 2002

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